

Georgetown Canyon, Right Fork Mine  
Preliminary Assessment Report Addendum  
November 2008

# **Georgetown Canyon, Right Fork Mine Preliminary Assessment Report Addendum**

Bear Lake County  
State of Idaho



**Department of Environmental Quality**

August 2008

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## **1. Introduction**

Preliminary Assessments (PA) of the Georgetown Canyon, Right Fork Mine were conducted in 2002 (DEQ, 2004a) and November 2007 (DEQ, 2007) to ensure all historic mining sites within the Idaho Phosphate Mining Resource Area have been inspected and evaluated in accordance with the goals and objectives outlined in the *Area Wide Risk Management Plan* (DEQ, 2004b). This addendum to the November 2007 report has been prepared to present the findings of the August 14, 2008 site visit and to refine reclamation recommendations made by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in 2007.

### **3.4. Inspection Findings**

The DEQ inspection team visited the Right Fork Mine site (Figure 1) on August 14, 2008 as a follow-up to the November 2007 PA Report (DEQ, 2007). No samples were collected during the 2008 site visit. Visual inspection of the site confirmed the 2002 interagency team findings. A seldom used, single lane dirt road (Right Fork Canyon Road) runs approximately 3 miles from the main Georgetown Canyon Road to end within 270 feet of the Right Fork Mine. The remains of the mine access road starts at the end of the Right Fork Canyon Road and ends approximately 40 feet west of the Right Fork Mine's only known shaft. The access road is over grown with grasses and shrubs and appears to be currently used primarily by all-terrain vehicles. See photograph 1 in the Appendix. There are no restrictions to mine access, other than poor road conditions and the remote location.

The mine shaft, located at the base of the access road cut, is collapsed, yet remains identifiable and has a small opening that may continue down into the mine tunnel. The shaft does not appear to pose any environmental hazards. See photograph 2 in the Appendix.

The main waste rock dump is located about 50 feet southeast of the shaft and is not evident from the access road or the Right Fork Canyon Road. Vegetation and vegetative debris are abundant on the dump with little signs of erosion. A log cabin is located on the southwestern edge of the dump (Photos 3 and 4). The main dump is approximately 400 square feet in area, 20 feet high and estimated to contain 200 to 300 cubic yards of waste rock. While the analysis of soil samples collected in 2002 (DEQ, 2004a) from and directly below this dump resulted in elevated levels of cadmium, chromium, nickel, selenium, vanadium, and zinc; the impacted area below the main waste rock dump appears to be small with little migration of darker waste materials. Disturbance of this dump is likely to cause more movement and erosion of waste rock than leaving the area in its current state.

A second and smaller waste rock dump is located at the terminus of the access road, approximately 40 feet west of the mine shaft. This dump is also well vegetated with abundant signs of wildlife usage (Photo 5).

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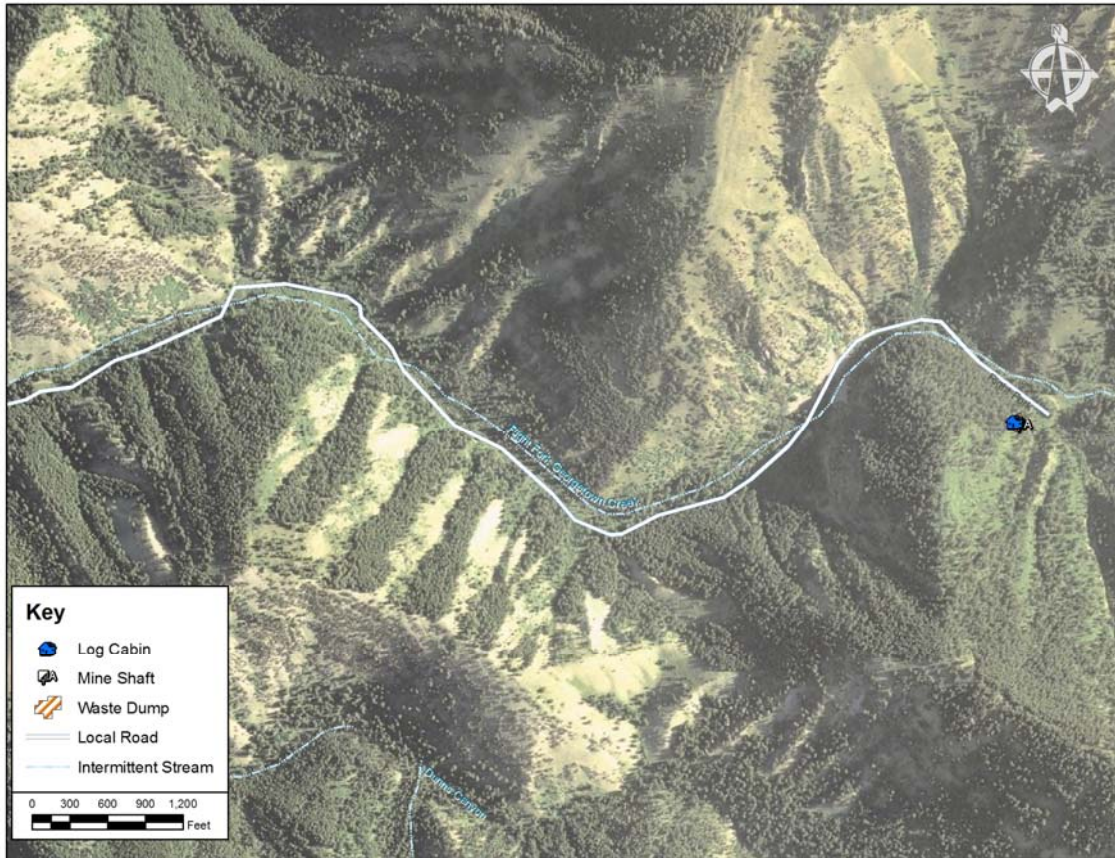


Figure 1. Right Fork Mine Site.

## 5.5. Recommendations

The 2002 interagency inspection team and the 2007 PA Report recommended:

- Evaluate the site as a component of DEQ's Administrative Order on Consent for Georgetown Canyon site investigation.
- Re-contouring and re-vegetating those waste rock dumps where natural vegetation has not established itself, and if necessary placement of clean soils and re-vegetation of these location.
- Closure of partially open shaft.

After a review of the prior recommendations and the 2008 site visit, DEQ has refined the above recommendations to include:

- Complete closure of shaft. This may be accomplished in a couple of hours, by one or two individuals with shovels.
- No further actions at this site would be necessary a disturbance of the waste rock dumps or roads at the mine would likely be detrimental to the area.

## References:

- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, 2004a. Orphan Mine Site Preliminary Assessment Screening Report. Prepared jointly by DEQ, Idaho Department of Lands, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service. Available URL: [http://giscenter-ims.isu.edu/SISP/Area\\_Wide\\_Reports.html](http://giscenter-ims.isu.edu/SISP/Area_Wide_Reports.html)
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, 2004b. Area Wide Risk Management Plan: Removal Action Goals And Objectives, And Action Levels For Addressing Releases And Impacts From Historic Phosphate Mining Operations In Southeast Idaho. Available URL: [http://giscenter-ims.isu.edu/SISP/Area\\_Wide\\_Reports.html](http://giscenter-ims.isu.edu/SISP/Area_Wide_Reports.html)
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, 2007. Paris Canyon Mine Preliminary Assessment Report, Bear Lake County, State of Idaho. Submitted to: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10.

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# **Attachment**



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**Georgetown Canyon, Right Fork Mine  
Conditions and Pictures  
August 14, 2008**



*Photo 1: The road leading to the Right Fork mine is narrow and overgrown yet still passable with four wheel drive and all-terrain vehicles during dryer months. There appears to be limited human activity and cattle grazing in the area.*



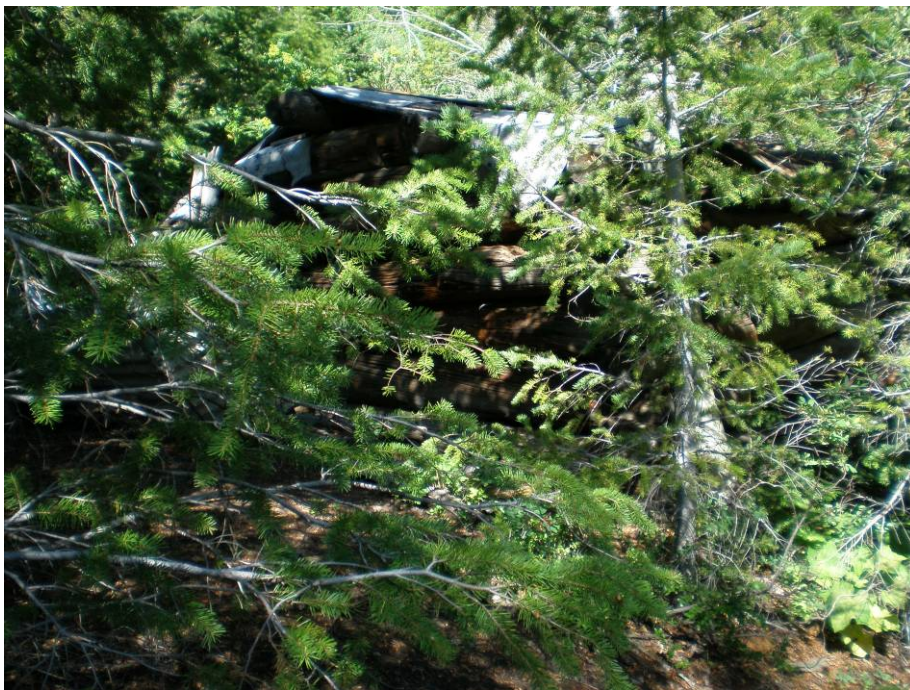
*Photo 2: Collapsed adit to the Georgetown Canyon, Right Fork Mine. No environmental concerns are associated with the adit. A small opening (approximately 3 feet x 3 feet) still remains in the adit that may be a hazard to a child.*



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*Photo 3: The waste rock dump located east of the cabin and north of the adit is not visible from below the mine due to the abundance of fir and aspen trees in the area. The dump is 400 square feet in area, 20 feet high and estimated to contain 200 to 300 cubic yards of waste rock.*



*Photo 4: The mine cabin is located about 30 feet north of the shaft and mine access road and just west of the main waste rock dump. The cabin is well hidden in a stand of fir trees, making it difficult to see from above and below the mine.*



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*Photo 5: A Small waste rock dump is located at the end of the mine access road, approximately 40 feet west of the shaft.  
The dump is well vegetated with signs of animal use.*